UNDRO DHA

September/October 1992

- UN Action Programme for Accelerated Assistance to Somalia
- Récentes catastrophes dans divers points du globe

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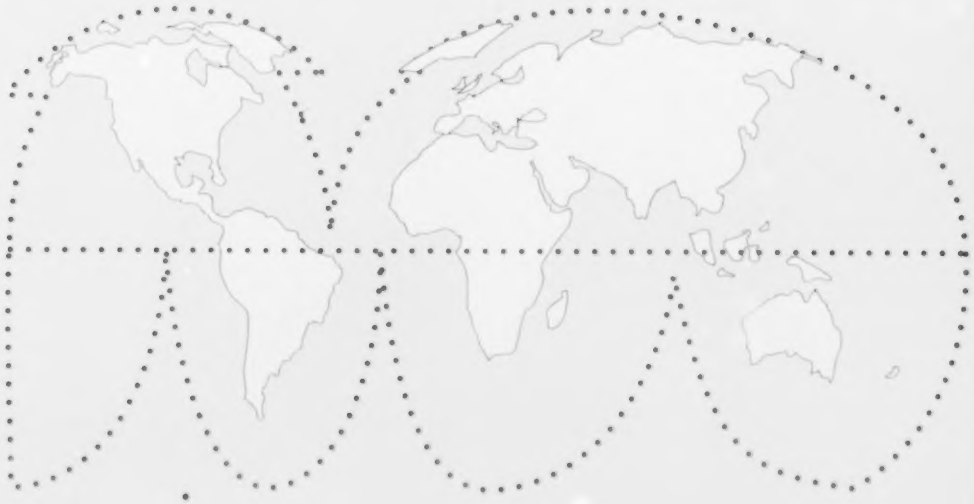

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Editorial

During the cold war era, every time a complex humanitarian emergency developed in any given country, the international community, depending on the circumstances, tended to respond to it from two separate angles. On the one hand, a "humanitarian assistance response", to be delivered by bilateral aid organizations, NGO's and the UN System, and other concerned organizations, working in close association with the local authorities, might be mounted. On the other hand, a "peace-keeping/political response" involving the UN peace-keeping forces as well as regional or national army contingents was, in several instances, organised and carried out under the aegis of the United Nations Secretariat. The two types of response were kept separate organizationally, even though on occasion, they co-existed in the same country. On occasion, some humanitarian assistance was delivered by peace-keeping operations as a small and minor component of their action. Similarly, the humanitarian response to emergencies, particularly in Africa and in Asia, many times involved issues relating to security, and minor police operations. But the principle of separation between these two types of intervention prevailed.

The rapidly changing socio-political structure of the world, the rise of ethnic tensions and the renewed recourse to force to solve such tensions are now putting to the test the existing dichotomy in the international community's traditional response to humanitarian crises. There appears to be a strong case to rethink this process so as to find ways and means to bridge the gap between the two types of responses, especially when they have to be carried out concurrently. The main objectives remain how best to save lives and to carry out efficient operations that are financially affordable.

To obtain the answer to such preoccupations, it is of utmost importance to focus attention on organizational and operational issues at the field

A l'époque de la guerre froide, chaque fois qu'une situation d'urgence complexe se développait dans un pays donné, la communauté internationale, selon les circonstances, avait tendance à y répondre par deux types d'intervention fort différente l'une de l'autre. Soit en mettant sur pied une opération d'assistance humanitaire, fournie par les organisations d'aide bilatérale, les ONG, le système onusien et autres organisations concernées, en étroite collaboration avec les autorités locales. Soit, et ce, dans bien des cas, en organisant et en entreprenant, sous les auspices du Secrétariat des Nations Unies, une opération politique de maintien de la paix, faisant appel aux Forces des Nations Unies ainsi qu'à des contingents armés nationaux ou régionaux. Ces deux types d'intervention étaient organisés de façon séparée, même si on y avait parfois recours simultanément dans un même pays. Quelquefois, les opérations de maintien de la paix fournissaient aussi une certaine aide humanitaire mais cela ne représentait qu'une partie restreinte et secondaire des opérations. Réciproquement, une opération d'assistance humanitaire pouvait avoir à traiter de questions de sécurité et d'opérations de police mineures, tout particulièrement en Afrique et en Asie. Toutefois, le principe de la séparation entre ces deux formes d'intervention de la communauté internationale prévalait toujours.

Aujourd'hui, la structure politico-sociale du monde est en pleine mutation. Ce changement rapide, ainsi que la montée des tensions ethniques et le retour du recours à la force pour y mettre un terme, remettent en question cette dichotomie de la traditionnelle intervention internationale en réponse aux crises humanitaires. La question est de taille et exige d'être reconsidérée de près afin que l'on puisse trouver le moyen de combler le vide qui existe entre les deux formes d'intervention, surtout quand elles doivent être mises en oeuvre simultanément. Le but principal de cette reconsidération n'est-il pas de nous permettre d'être mieux à même de sauver des vies humaines en menant à bien des opérations efficaces et abordables sur le plan financier?

Pour trouver une réponse à ces questions, il est primordial de se concentrer sur l'aspect organisationnel et opérationnel de l'action sur le terrain. Les décideurs de la communauté internationale ont

level. The natural tendency of decision makers in the international community to give priority to policy over operational issues must be reversed if the response to future complex emergencies is to be efficient. The recent restructuring of the United Nations Headquarters, including the establishment of DHA, may have to be followed by similar initiatives with regard to field operations of the United Nations System, which must henceforth be conceived as an integrated whole, and not exclusively seen from either the humanitarian assistance angle or from the peace-keeping side. Aid organizations, both official and private, also have to make adjustments of their own, to adapt to the new reality.

Humanitarian action is inspired by the noblest of motives and it is often delivered by dedicated individuals, who take great risks with their lives and their health, in a very altruistic way, to bring survival assistance and comfort to men, women and children enduring intense suffering. But the efficiency of humanitarian assistance is greatly dependent upon a well organised and professionally run operation. The tight operational control approach that peace-keepers bring to their activities may provide some guidelines for an improved field level mechanism in cases of complex emergencies. In particular, the experience gained recently with UNOSOM (United Nations Operation for Somalia) and UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia), may provide some leads and answers.

tendance à accorder la priorité à la politique aux dépens de l'opérationnel. Il faut inverser cette tendance si l'on veut que la réponse aux prochaines situations d'urgence complexes soit une réponse efficace. Il se pourrait bien que, suite à la restructuration récente du siège de l'ONU, y compris la création du Département des Affaires Humanitaires (DAH), il faille entreprendre des iniatives similaires quant aux opérations de l'ONU sur le terrain, qui devront désormais être conçues comme une seule et même opération intégrée et non plus perçues soit comme une intervention d'aide humanitaire soit comme une opération de maintien de la paix. Les organisations d'aide, qu'elles soient officielles ou privées, devront elles aussi procéder à certains changements afin de s'adapter à une réalité nouvelle.

L'action humanitaire est animée par la plus noble des motivations et ceux qui servent sa cause lui sont souvent complètement acquis, au péril de leur santé et de leur vie, faisant preuve d'altruisme afin que les hommes, les femmes et les enfants qui souffrent puissent avoir une chance de survie et un minimum de bien être. Mais l'efficacité de l'aide humanitaire dépend en grande partie d'une organisation bien structurée, et fonctionnant avec rigueur et professionalisme. L'approche rigoureuse de "contrôle des opérations" adoptée par les Forces de l'ONU pour le Maintien de la Paix pourrait sans doute servir d'inspiration à l'amélioration des mécanismes mis en place sur le terrain lors d'urgences complexes. Les récentes expériences de l'ONUSOM (Opération ONU pour la Somalie) et de l'APRONUC (Autorité Provisoire de l'ONU au Cambodge) pourraient apporter certaines réponses et sevir de guide en la matière.

UN/Y. Nagata

The Earth Trembles in Cairo

Monday 12 October 1992, 15.09 hrs local time: an earthquake measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale strikes Egypt with its epicentre located just 30 kms southwest of Cairo. In Cairo, a busy city with 12 million inhabitants and another 4 million transit population commuting every day to their jobs, the quake shakes buildings and other structures for almost a full minute, halts all activities and sends people towards the exits in panic.

In DHA-UNDRO in Geneva, the first report of the earthquake reaches the monitoring desk for Africa a few minutes after its occurrence and an emergency group is established to follow the situation as first reports on damage and casualties are received. Immediately, contacts are taken with the National Emergency Relief Service in Egypt, the Civil Defence Department, which reports that an assessment of damage is under way but that damage has been reported from many parts of Cairo and that rescue operations are being carried out parallel to the assessment. Contacts are also established with the Office of the UN Resident Co-ordinator in Cairo as well as with International Relief Organizations and Services to exchange information and prepare for an international relief operation, should this become necessary.

The first figures of casualties and damage are fairly modest but with the assessment of damage progressing in the hours after the quake, the numbers of dead and injured continue to raise as do the numbers of damage to buildings. In the evening of 12 October, based on the still sketchy information available but facing what is judged as a potentially major emergency in a densely populated area, DHA-UNDRO decides to despatch relief co-ordination officers, experts on urban search and rescue and operational co-ordination, to Cairo to assist in damage assessment and, if this should become necessary in the co-ordination of international relief teams and resources.

This time, however, and despite significant loss of life, the earthquake did not create a major disaster like for example the Armenian earthquake of 1988. The immediate damage in Cairo, although serious and of incalculable value in the case of cultural monuments, was limited to punctual collapses of buildings, mostly two or three storey houses in the older parts of the city. One tall building of 14 storeys collapsed in

DHA-UNDRO/O. Almgren

Cairo, a city of 12 million inhabitants in which modern tall buildings rise amidst traditional Arab architecture

Heliopolis, close to central Cairo, killing several people including one United Nations staff member together with his wife and daughter*. In the rural areas on the outskirts of Cairo, the damage is reported as more severe with many families made homeless due to the collapse of their homes. People did not dare to go back to their houses in fear of an after-shock which could crumble the building. Almost 600 people were killed, 10,000 injured and 3,000 families lost their homes. The total damage is still being assessed and it is uncertain how much damage the earthquake has caused to sophisticated structures and buildings and monuments included in the cultural heritage of Egypt. In the immediate aftermath of the emergency, the Government of Egypt faced a shortage of shelter material, such as tents, blankets and cooking utensils. It appealed to DHA-UNDRO to assist in mobilizing international assistance to address this relief need in order to provide temporary shelter for the homeless.

At DHA-UNDRO Headquarters, information reports are regularly issued to the international community, describing the situation as it develops. Following the request by Egyptian authorities for assistance in the sector of shelter, a relief flight containing 35 tons of tents, blankets and kitchen utensils, was organized from the DHA-UNDRO wharehouse in Pisa, financed by the Government of Italy. An emergency grant of US $50,000 was allocated for immediate local purchase of the same kind of material through the UNDP office in Cairo. In all, contributions amounting to approximately US $190 million have been reported to DHA-UNDRO from governments and other sources, in response to the emergency.

DHA-UNDRO/O. Almgren

Search and Rescue Teams looking for signs of life in a collapsed 14 storey building in Heliopolis

Meanwhile in Cairo, the DHA-UNDRO delegates visited the affected sites and areas for first hand impressions of the damage and to meet with the affected population and rescue workers in the first line of the relief operation. They also assisted in meetings with the United Nations Disaster Management Team (DMT), convened under the chairmanship of the U.N. Resident Coordinator, and met with the national emergency management authorities, including the Prime Minister who himself is charing the National Emergency Committee which has been formed following the earthquake, for co-ordination purposes and in order to gather information on the overall situation and assess the needs for international relief assistance.

In conclusion it can be said that the citizens of Cairo and Egypt as a whole, although strongly shaken and having to deplore 600 fatal casualties and the loss of so many homes, could have faced a much worse situation if the intensity of the earthquake had been more than 5.9. The damage that could have been caused by a stronger earthquake located as closely to Cairo is difficult to fathom. Even with this low intensity earthquake, damage that might have been caused to more sophisticated structures, will take a long time to be assessed. Already, teams from United Nations agencies such as DHA-UNDRO, UNESCO and HABITAT as well as from various governments are flying in to Cairo to help in this task.

This earthquake might serve as a reminder that although not considered as an earthquake prone area, Cairo is exposed to this risk. Experience gained from this emergency should now been used in reviewing vulnerability studies as well as mitigation and emergency pre-paredness activities for such a largely populated city. ■

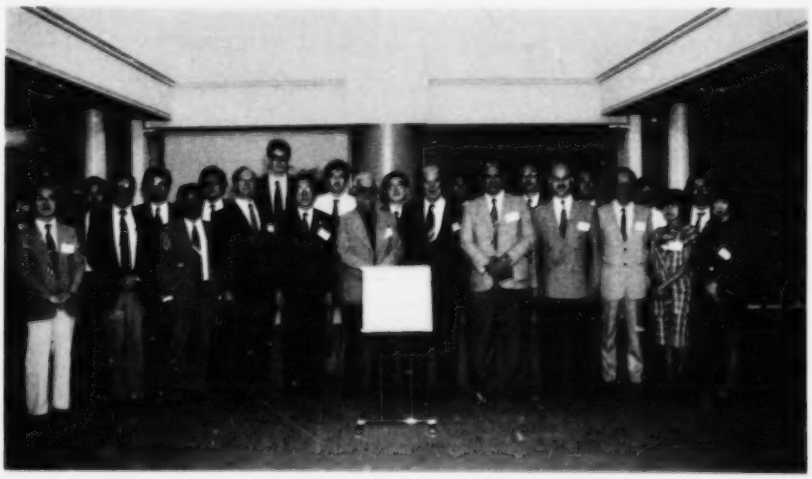
**Mr. Abderrazaq Al Shennawy, an Egyptian national, UN Expert on assignment in Karthoum, Sudan, was on leave in Cairo when the building collapsed.*

Meeting of the INSARAG Regional Group for Asia and the Pacific

How to Improve International Relief Operations at the Site of a Disaster

Based on the experience from international relief operations following major earthquakes, the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) was established in December 1991 on the initiative of DHA-UNDRO as a framework for co-operation between Governments and Organizations in improving relief operations at the site of a disaster, as well as increasing and accelerating the availability of competent resources, local and international, for such operations. The overall ambition of INSARAG is expressed in the first paragraph of its mandate: ***"to develop effective international relationships aimed at saving lives and rendering humani-tarian services following disasters".*** It is based on the work of a steering group and three regional groups: the Americas, Africa/Europe and Asia/Pacific.

A first meeting of the INSARAG regional group of Asia and the Pacific was convened by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on 8 and 9 September 1992 in Chiba, Japan. The meeting was attended by 21 participants from Governments and key regional and international organizations such as the United Nations and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC). The overall scope and purpose of the meeting was to review the mandate and initiatives of INSARAG in a regional context as well as to discuss the opportunities to enhance and complement, through INSARAG, current disaster management programmes in Asia and the Pacific. DHA-UNDRO participants at the meeting, came both from headquarters in Geneva and from the South Pacific Programme Office (SPPO) located in Suva, Fiji.



INSARAG participants gathered at "Makuhary Messe" Chiba, Japan

At the meeting consensus was reached on the importance of, as a first step, enlarging the network of contacts created through INSARAG, especially at a regional level. It was also agreed that, given time, INSARAG can become a vital instrument in improving international relief operations following emergencies in the Asian Pacific region as well as globally. Appreciation was expressed to the Government of Japan for having taken a leading role in this work.

To follow-up as well as to expand on the results achieved within INSARAG so far, some of which were tested during the earthquake in Erzincan, Turkey, earlier this year and more recently following the earthquake in Cairo, DHA-UNDRO is now intensifying its efforts in the field of "operational co-ordination". This work involves the establishment of an **Operational Co-ordination/ Search and Rescue Programme** for which donor support is presently being sought.

The programme will focus on the development of standing arrangements with governments in the deployment of relief teams and standard operational procedures for damage assessment, mobilization and co-ordination of relief resources following sudden emergencies in addition to improving the institutional capability of DHA-UNDRO to respond at the on-site level in disasters. ■

Proposed UN 100-Day Action Programme Strongly Supported at Co-ordination Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance to Somalia

A UN Action Programme for Accelerated Assistance to Somalia was presented in Geneva during a special two-day meeting held on 12-13 October which brought together, on behalf of the Secretary-General and at the invitation of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Eliasson, representatives of Governments, United-Nations agencies, Non-governmental and Inter-governmental agencies. The Programme was prepared in close consultation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia Ambassador Sahnoun, by UN agencies and Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Mogadishu and Geneva, following a high-level Inter-Agency Mission to Somalia between 10 and 12 September 1992, which was led by Mr. Eliasson and included UNICEF's Executive Director, Mr. James Grant. The Programme identifies the ***immediate priority measures required to meet the most urgent needs of what has already become one of the worst catastrophes in living memory.***

About one million Somalis are on the brink of death as a result of civil conflict, famine and disease and millions more may also be seriously at risk if urgent assistance is not forthcoming. Due to the deteriorating security situation in the country, a situation exarcerbated by drought, 700,000 Somalis have sought refuge in neighbouring countries and another 300,000 are exiled, inter alia, in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Europe and North America. The situation has continued to deteriorate over the last months in several parts of Somalia. The minimum to survive is out of reach for most Somalis, and law and order are sadly wanting.

The Nation Newspaper (Nairobi)/ Chegewa Gamachamba

The Geneva meeting, which was chaired by Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia, sought, in particular, to identify mechanisms for implementation of the programmes, obstacles to such implementation, and ways to overcome these obstacles. Some 350 delegates representing 83 countries, 15 United Nations organizations, specialized agencies, the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) and other non-governmental organisations participated in the meeting. During two days, they discussed means of accelerating critically required relief efforts which would pave the way for eventual recovery of the Somali society. Support was expressed for the 100-Day Action Programme, indications were given by participants on how they would contribute to its implementation.

Opening the meeting, Mohamed Sahnoun, declared that the delivery of relief assistance and the security arrangements that were being put into place would not by themselves resolve the crisis in Somalia. He stressed the fact that the solution lay in national reconciliation among all Somali parties: " ***Without national reconciliation to facilitate reconstruction and the restoration of economic activities, Somalia will become a bottomless pit into which the donor community will continue to pour humanitarian assistance with no end in sight",*** he stated, encouraging governmental and intergovernmental agencies to start

The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Somalia, Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, chairing the meeting.

returning to Somalia now and joining in the efforts to begin the reconstruction process.

- **Beyond immediate relief lies the question of permanent peace**

The dangerous security situation prevailing throughout the country was raised during the Conference as a major concern that could hinder the implementation of the proposed Action Programme. Several speakers, while expressing full support to the proposed Action Programme, outlined that international mobilization could only succeed within the framework of an agreement for political reconciliation and that the ultimate solution for peace was to be found inside Somalia. "The solution", stated Mohamed Sahnoun, "lies in the achievement of national reconciliation among all Somali parties, factions and movements which could lead to the restoration of the government and a return to normalcy". Towards that end, it was hoped that a national reconciliation conference would take place before the end of the year.

- **The nucleus of a Somali police countrywide**

Meanwhile, in order to address the security problem, 500 UN security

To accelerate relief efforts and pave the way for the recovery of the Somali Society, the UN and non-governmental organizations have agreed to take immediate action within the context of this 100-Day Programme. The eight components of the Action Programme include massive infusion of food aid, provision of basic health services, clean water, sanitation and shelter material, prevention of further refugee flows, and civil society rehabilitation and recovery. A total of US $82.7 million would be required to fund the Action Programme. Since adequate security is essential to implement the Accelerated Programme, UN Security Forces would be deployed to help ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian relief goods from ports to distribution points. The support to be provided by the UN and NGO partners who implement many UN agency programmes will consist of: protection of relief workers and supplies; negotiations; provision of funding and implementing partners; and provision of a system-wide communications network. The UN will strengthen their presence in Somalia. The UN agencies and NGOs are committed to assist in building a civil society, strengthening local capacity and working with indigeneous non-governmental organizations. The UN operations in Somalia fall under the overall co-ordination of the Secretary General's Special Representative for Somalia Mr. Mohamed Shanoun. Under his responsibility, and within the UN Office for Somalia (UNOSOM), a Co-ordinator for Humanitarian Assistance promotes close practical collaboration among UN agencies, NGOs and local community institutions. Senior field officers from UNOSOM in the four operational zones will monitor and report on humanitarian activities and will facilitate United Nations, NGO and local humanitarian operations when so requested. Each UN agency will make specific arrangements with implementing partners. The urgent activities required to save millions of lives, as outlined in the 100-Day Action Programme, will depend on the delivery of contributions from the donor community. With implementation mechanisms in place and increased staff on the ground, it is essential that the Action Programme be funded now. It would be carried out through the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refuges (UNHCR) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV).

personnel are being deployed in Mogadishu, to ensure the protection of relief operations at the seaport and airport as well as along the routes used for distribution of humanitarian assistance. Owing to the complexity of the political and military situation in Somalia, small security units of Somalis would be set up to assist the UN personnel in the various distribution centres. Only an arrangement of that nature could assure safety for relief workers and protection for humanitarian supplies. This could ultimately form the nucleus of a Somali police countrywide. The proposed Somali guards would require uniforms, transport and communications equipment. Support and assistance of foreign governments would be urgently needed in this field.

● Improving the co-ordination of Humanitarian Aid

The issue of co-ordination of humanitarian aid was alluded to by many speakers, along with the need for improved performance in this area. "The rapid fielding of additional staff for UNOSOM, including especially the office of the Co-ordinator for Humanitarian Assistance, both in Mogadishu as well as in designated zones, should further improve this situation," said Mohamed Sahnoun, expressing his satisfaction to have heard strong support for efforts to establish a clear division of responsibility among the United Nations entities. Regarding logistics and aid delivery, he said he hoped that some 50,000 metric tons of food per month would be moved into Somalia and distributed according to the Programme. A large percentage of that work would be carried out by the World Food Programme (WFP) and ICRC. While present food pledges appear to cover all requirements, additional cash resources were needed for transportation of that food. Insisting on the necessity to extend air operations, Mohamed Sahnoun stated that the smooth running of the logistics sector was also dependent on good coordination of shipments into Somalia: "Too many items arriving at the same time caused port congestion ... too little would again jeopardize the relief operations". Therefore he urged all concerned to arrange the phasing in of their sea deliveries through the Department for Humanitarian Affairs or WFP. The monetization of food aid has also a significant bearing on logistics, added Mohamed Sahnoun, explaining that high-value food could be better channelled through merchants to reach areas where otherwise they would have serious distribution problems and that this monetization would constitue a boost for revitalizing normal trade and transport system.

UNHCR/L. Witherspoon

● Rehabilitation and Recovery

A number of speakers stated the importance of focusing attention not only on relief, but also on rehabilitation and recovery needs as well, required right now in many parts of the country, including Northwest, Northeast and Central Somalia. Donors were asked to give special attention to these needs in the coming weeks as they committed resources for Somalia. "The Action Programme should be seen as an important milestone in the march towards reconstruction" stated Mrs. Sadako Ogata, UN High-Commissioner for Refugees, "but it is only a part of a longer-term plan to meet the needs of Somalia and to recreate a functioning civil society there..."

● Funds should allow agencies maximum flexibility

Reviewing the various forms of assistance pledged during the meeting by Governments and others, including food, cash, supplementary food and medicines, as well as air transportation, Mohamed Sahnoun expressed satisfaction at the massive support for the Action Programme and called upon donors to rapidly fulfill their contribution pledges. "Yet, despite those demonstrations of generosity", he said, "resources up to US $83 million are urgently required for the 100-Day Action Programme, particularly in the water, health, sanitation and education sectors". Given the volatility and unpredictability of the situation, donors were asked to provide their contributions in a way that would allow agencies maximum flexibility. Funds were also required to support local and regional administrative structures, including the provision of salaries for those Somali professionals who continued to offer their services without remuneration. It had been suggested that the bilateral donors could assist Somalia in returning to "civil society" by drawing from experiences in Eastern Europe.

In the final analysis, Mohamed Sahnoun said that the implemen-

The Programme is the product of close co-operation between UN agencies and representatives of non-governmental organisations and the International Committee of the Red Cross. It was established in close consultation and under the overall guidance of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia. Collaboration between all implementing parties would be formalized through a United Nations/NGO Task Force in Mogadishu and the four territorial zones. The Task Force would be responsible for the next phase of the relief and recovery operation. As part of the overall review of the Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa (SEPHA), a UN Inter-Agency/NGO mission, would review the emergency relief and recovery requirements of Somalia in anticipation of an updated appeal early next year. In the meantime, through its SEPHA Unit, DHA-UNDRO would closely monitor resources made available for the 100 Day-Action Programme and would be reporting on the programme's progress through regular situation reports to the international community.

tation of the 100-Day Programme would depend upon the full co-operation of all segments of Somali society. Towards that end, a conference of relevant Somali groupings would take place shortly, most likely in Addis Ababa. "This conference", he concluded, "has demonstrated a commitment to the people of Somalia that will prove fundamental to both emergency relief and recovery operations in the beleaguered country. I also think ***it has helped the international system learn lessons which will prove invaluable in a world that, unfortunately, appears ever more disaster prone.***"

■

Reader's Corner

In early October, a few days before the Special Meeting on Somalia was held in Geneva, we received a letter from Tunde Abdul, a fourth year pupil at Hyndland Secondary School, Glasgow, U.K. We reproduce here below Tunde's letter to which we have meanwhile answered. We are happy to inform our readers that from now on DHA-UNDRO News will have a reader's corner. ***Thank you, Tunde, for your interest in our work and your concern for the plight of the Somali people.***

Dear Sir, Ma/

I am a fourth pupil at Hyndland Secondary School taking standard grade Modern Studies. I am investigating the aid given to Somali and since I knew you were one of the agencies co-ordinating the relief efforts, I would be most grateful if you could please send me some information on the topic.

(1) What type of aid is given?
(2) Is enough aid given and is it the right kind of aid?
(3) Does the aid reach the places where they are needed?
(4) What more can be done?
(5) Does the war stop aid from reaching the most vital area?
(6) What are the most vital areas aid has not reached?
(7) Was the problem recognized fast enough?
(8) How many people die each day/month?
(9) How many children/adults/elderly people die each day/month?
(10) How might a disaster like this be prevented?
(11) Why did they not have enough food to feed themselves?
(12) What was the cause of this disaster?

I would like to thank you for your help and co-operation.

Yours faithfully

Tunde Abdul

Donation for the Children of Somalia

Two representatives of the "Ecole Moser - Chêne-Bougeries" in Geneva presented DHA-UNDRO with a check in the amount of Swiss Francs 2,000, representing donations by the students of the school for the children of Somalia. As requested, the money will turn over to the Organization "Save the Children", Switzerland.

We sincerely wish to thank all the students who have contributed to this humanitarian gesture.

Un été meurtrier

Aperçu des récentes catastrophes survenues d'août à octobre 1992 dans divers points du globe

Le sort de certaines régions du monde dépend bien souvent de conditions climatiques spécifiques, comme la mousson, qui peut être à la fois dévastatrice, - c'est le cas du Pakistan, - ou qui peut mettre fin à la sécheresse comme en Inde où 70 millions de personnes en étaient menacées. Bien que nous entrions dans un XXIe siècle où progrès scientifique et technique avancent à grand pas, l'Homme n'a pas totalement réussi à dompter les forces de la nature et reste parfois impuissant devant les catastrophes naturelles en dépit des systèmes d'alerte sophistiqués et d'équipes de secours de haut niveau. La France avec ses inondations soudaines survenues dans le sud-est du pays, les Bahamas et la Floride aux Etats-Unis balayés par l'ouragan Andrew, en sont la preuve.

AFGHANISTAN
Pluies soudaines

Le 3 septembre 1992, des pluies soudaines ont frappé la région montagneuse de l'Hindou Kush provoquant des torrents de boue qui ont fait déborder trois fleuves et ravagé les vallées de Salang, Ghorband et Shutul et touchant sévèrement la ville de Gulbahar à 70 km au nord de Kaboul. 450 personnes ont trouvé la mort, et plus de 500 ont été portées disparues. Cette catastrophe a surtout touché les réfugiés de retour du Pakistan après 14 ans de guerre civile.

Photo UNDP/Philippines

Maison engloutie par les coulées de boues suite aux pluies torrentielles sur le Mt. Pinatubo en eruption (voir Philippines).

BAHAMAS/ETATS-UNIS
balayés par le passage du cyclone Andrew, le plus meurtrier de ce siècle dans la région

Le 23 août 1992, malgré les alertes lancées aux Bahamas, Cuba et le sud-est de la Floride, l'ouragan Andrew, le plus violent depuis 50 ans avec des vents allant jusqu'à 240 km/h, a ravagé les Bahamas, faisant 4 morts, 1 700 sans abri, détruisant 800 maisons, et endommageant sérieusement l'infrastructure. Le cyclone tropical s'est ensuite acharné le 24 août sur la côte sud-est de la Floride, au sud de Miami, et tout en perdant de la vitesse a poursuivi sa course meurtrière sur la Louisiane le 26 août, après avoir épargné la Nouvelle Orléans. L'ouragan s'est transformé en tempête tropicale, non moins dévastatrice car provoquant des pluies diluviennes, qui ont ravagé

En 1988 l'ouragan "Gilbert" dévasta la Jamaïque et l'année suivante "Hugo" s' abattit sur la Caroline du Sud et les Caraïbes. Ces violents ouragans seraient une des conséquences du réchauffement de l'atmosphère. "Andrew" peut être comparé à "Hugo" et à la tempête qui frappa Miami en septembre 1926.

les localités côtières. Le bilan est lourd: 35 morts, de nombreux disparus et des dégâts matériels estimés de 15 à 20 milliards de dollars avec 63 000 maisons détruites pour la Floride, entre 400 millions et 2 milliards de dollars et 8 000 maisons détruites pour la Louisiane. On compte plus de 180 000 personnes sans abri. La Floride n'a jusqu'ici connu aucune catastrophe naturelle de cette ampleur. Beaucoup d'abris organisés avant l'arrivée d'"Andrew" ont continué à être ouverts aux réfugiés. Trois millions de personnes ont eu l'électricité coupée pendant plusieurs jours et les écoles ont dû fermer.

CHINE
Typhon Polly

Le typhon Polly, d'une rare violence, a fait 146 morts, détruit 10 000 maisons et causé des dégâts estimés à 2,4 milliards de yuans.

COLOMBIE
Trois cataclysmes en moins de 48 heures

Le 17 octobre, un violent tremblement de terre d'une magnitude de 6,6 sur l'échelle de Richter, a ébranlé la province d'Antioquia, environ 140 km au nord-ouest de Medellin et 370 km au nord-ouest de Bogota. Pour plus de sécurité des centaines de personnes ont dû être évacuées. Le 18 octobre un second seisme suivi de plusieurs "répliques" secouait à nouveau la Colombie ne faisant heureusement aucun mort mais des dégâts matériels importants. Cette activité sismique a engendré l'explosion du volcan Cacahual qui a déversé sur les maisons des coulées de boue brûlantes. Plusieurs personnes ont été blessées et l'on compte *700 sans abris. C'est le village de* Murindo, l'un des plus deshérités de la région, qui a été touché à 90%. Situé dans la région d'Uruba près du village de San Pedro, l'éruption du Cacahual nous rappelle celle du 13 novembre 1985, du Nevado del Ruiz. La tragédie de la petite ville d'Armero engloutie par des coulées de boue monstrueuses restera gravée dans nos mémoires. Plus de 23 000 personnes y trouvèrent la mort et les dégâts atteignirent environ 212 millions de dollars.

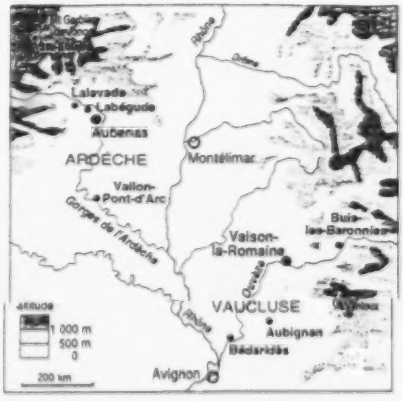
EGYPTE
Un violent séisme endeuille la ville du Caire. 541 morts et plus de 6 500 blessés, tel est jusqu'à présent le bilan de cette catastrophe

Un violent tremblement de terre survenu le 12 octobre a ébranlé la capitale égyptienne provoquant des effondrements spectaculaires de plusieurs édifices dans le quartier résidentiel d'Héliopolis et ceux plus populaires de Daher, Charabeya, Boulak et Gammaleya. Les maisons vétustes ont enseveli leurs habitants sans qu'ils aient eu le temps de s'enfuir. La panique s'est emparée de la population et des écoliers en particulier dont une quarantaine a trouvé la mort. Le métro et le barrage d'Assouan ont heureusement bien résisté. Les sites antiques, et l'on pense bien sûr aux pyramides et au sphinx, que l'on croyait immunisés contre toute destruction, n'ont malheureusement pas été épargnés. Plus d'un an sera nécessaire à la réparation du Sphinx. D'autres monuments tels que la Pyramide de Saqqara, le temple de Qom Ombo et le toit du Musée égyptien du Caire ont été touchés. Déjà en 1262 le fameux phare d'Alexandrie avait été détruit par un violent séisme. Le dernier tremblement de terre ayant frappé l'Egypte remonte à 1847 faisant une centaine de morts. *(voir article page 4)*

FRANCE
Des pluies diluviennes frappent de plein fouet le sud-est du pays. Les départements du Vaucluse, de l'Ardèche et de la Drome déclarés zones sinistrées et le Plan d'urgence ORSEC déclenché

Le mardi noir du 22 septembre avec ses orages continus qui se sont abattus dans le sud-est de la France, engloutissant la ville antique de Vaison-la-Romaine, a transformé cette région en spectacle de désolation. L'affluent torrentiel du Rhône qu'est l'Ardèche est un habitué des crues: 11,20 m en 1982, 12m en 1977, 12,20 m en 1958 et 15,80 m en 1900. L'Ouvèze, transformée en un torrent de 15 m de haut, a déferlé sur Vaison-La-Romaine détruisant tout sur son passage et entraînant plusieurs personnes dans la mort. Certains ont vécu la tragédie de ne pouvoir venir en aide et de voir qui son voisin, qui un être cher, emporté par les eaux. Au total 32 morts, plusieurs disparus et parmi eux des touristes ensevelis dans leur caravane ou tente de camping et qu'il est toujours difficile de retrouver. Comme l'expliquait le Commandant Yves Cavalier, responsable des opérations de secours, il n'y avait "techniquement aucune chance de retrouver des gens vivants" et ceci malgré les 16 hélicoptères et les 1 500 secouristes mobilisés.

Aux Etats-Unis comme en France de tels drames relancent le débat sur la prévention des risques naturels.



The boundaries & names on the maps in this article do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Le tsunami, mot japonais, est une onde de marée engendrée dans l'océan par un puissant mouvement survenant des fonds marins tels que tremblement de terre ou eruption volcanique. Les vagues se déplacent dans toutes les directions mesurant de crête en crête plusieurs centaines de kilomètres. Dans l'océan, cette vague pas plus haute qu'un mètre ne se voit presque pas alors que dès qu'elle approche des côtes elle enfle démesurément et peut atteindre les 20 mètres. Le tsunami, fréquent autour du pacifique, se déplace très rapidement causant d'importants dégâts. "En mai 1960, par exemple, le très violent séisme du Chili engendra un tsunami qui fit une centaine de morts au Japon, une quarantaine aux îles Hawaii et démolit le plus grand site à statues de l'île de Pâque." *(Le Monde).*

Pendjab, Pakistan , 1992

INDE
Inondations

Les inondations survenues dans les Etats d'Uttar Pradesh, de Jammu et du Cachemire ont causé la mort de presque 500 personnes et endommagé quelque 14 000 maisons. Des pluies de mousson torrentielles ont également provoqué de sévères inondations dans le Kérala, au sud du pays, faisant au moins une cinquantaine de morts.

KIRGHIZIE
A nouveau touché par un tremblement de terre

Frappé par une série de catastrophes naturelles en mai dernier - inondations, glissements de terrain et tremblement de terre - le Kirghizie est à nouveau ébranlé par un violent séisme causant la mort d'une cinquantaine de personnes. Les dégâts se chiffrent à 130 millions de dollars.

NICARAGUA
Tremblement de terre/ Tsunami

Le 1 septembre un puissant tremblement de terre d'une magnitude de 7,2 sur l'échelle de Richter suivi d'un tsunami dont les vagues ont atteint jusqu'à 15 m de haut a ébranlé la côte Pacifique du Nicaragua, (environ 120 km au sud-ouest de Managua) faisant 116 morts, 489 blessés, 63 disparus; 40 500 personnes sont touchées directement ou indirectement. La chaîne d'une quarantaine de volcans qui traverse le Nicaragua est une constante menace de mouvements sismiques. L'histoire du pays est marquée par les tremblements de terre, (celui du 23 décembre 1972 ayant tué entre 5 000 et 12 000 personnes), et les éruptions volcaniques. Marqué par la guerre civile de 1980-1989, dévasté par le cyclone Joan en octobre 1988, le Nicaragua est à nouveau frappé par un tsunami dont les dégâts sont estimés à 25 millions de dollars. Le littoral a été saccagé, la tourmente et les nombreuses secousses appelées "répliques" (plus d'une centaine) survenues après le désastre, balayant tout sur leur passage. Les plus vulnérables ont été les enfants emportés par les vagues. Ceux ayant réchappé souffrent de maladies respiratoires et de diarrhée.

PAKISTAN
Mousson dévastatrice

Depuis le mois d'août, le Pakistan est continuellement ravagé par des catastrophes naturelles : pluies de mousson diluviennes qui se sont abattues dans la province Sind au sud-est du pays; tremblement de terre le 28 août à 100 km au sud-ouest de Quetta; inondations dans la région d'Azad Kashmir au nord-ouest. Comme on peut le constater la majorité du territoire a été frappée faisant environ 1 500 morts. 6 722 950 personnes ont été touchées, 12 048 villages endommagés, 1 192 000 maisons détruites/endommagées, plus de 2 400 000 hectares dévastés. On estime à plus de 80 millions de dollars les pertes en récoltes et infrastructure sans compter les dégâts subis par la forêt.

La violence des pluies de mousson jusqu'ici sans précédent dans l'histoire du Pakistan (depuis son indépendance en 1947), ont provoqué le débordement des fleuves dans la province pakistanaise du Pendjab et entraîné de lourdes pertes humaines et de graves conséquences économiques pour la région qui est le grenier du pays. Au Cachemire pakistanais des milliers de sans abri ont dû abandonner leurs foyers menacés par les éboulements et les coulées de boue. La violence des crues des fleuves Jhelum et Chenab qui rejoignent l'Indus dans le Pendjab ont gravement touché la province de la Frontière du Nord-Ouest (NWFP) et la province méridionale du Sind.

PAYS-BAS
La chute du Boeing 747 d'El Al plonge le pays dans la stupeur

Lundi 5 octobre, en milieu d'après-midi, un Boeing cargo 747 de la compagnie israélienne s'écrase sur deux grands immeubles au sud-est d'Amsterdam faisant au moins 75 morts et disparus. La déflagration a été terrible et les sauveteurs n'ont pas eu la tâche facile pour extraire des décombres les victimes pour la plupart carbonisées. Il faudra du temps avant d'établir un bilan définitif. En l'espace de deux mois le monde vient de connaître une série d'accidents d'avion catastrophiques. Le 26 septembre un avion militaire nigérian s'écrase près de Lagos faisant 200 morts; le 28 septembre un Airbus-300 pakistanais tombe au dessus de l'Himalaya: 167 morts; déjà dans la même région, le 31 juillet, l'accident d'un A -300 des Thai Airways avait fait 113 morts.

PAPOUASIE NOUVELLE GUINEE
Eruption volcanique

Une éruption volcanique sur l'île de Manam, 800 km au nord-ouest de Port Moresby. " L'évacuation des 6 000 habitants de l'île a été envisagée."

PHILIPPINES
Le Mont Pinatubo en éruption continue ses ravages dans le Luzon Central. Depuis le 6 octobre 1992, l'alerte 5, qui signifie éruption en progrès, est toujours levée.

Le Mont Pinatubo était resté inactif pendant 600 ans. La première récente éruption, le 16 juin 1991, causa la mort de plus de 800 personnes. Plus de 250 000 ont dû être évacuées. Depuis juillet 1992 des pluies abondantes mêlées aux cendres des éruptions de 1991 ont provoqué des inondations, des glissements de terrain et des lahars, (mot indonésien pour désigner les monstrueuses coulées boueuses), atteignant 1,6 m de haut et détruisant ponts, routes et habitations dans les provinces de Pampanga, Tarlac et Zambales au nord de Manille. Depuis août, le danger d'une nouvelle éruption explosive plane sur la région. Les pluies torrentielles et continues sur le Mont Pinatubo déclenchent des lahars et des explosions secondaires particulièrement le long du fleuve Sacobia; les cendres sont projetées jusqu'à une hauteur de 5,5 km. La catastrophe prend de plus en plus d'ampleur faisant au moins 50 morts, 13 blessés, 10 disparus, et porte à 942 764 le nombre de personnes touchées. Les plaines du Luzon souvent inondées en période de mousson ont vu toutes leurs cultures de riz et de la canne à sucre emportées par des millions de tonnes de cendres et de rochers drainées par les violentes pluies dues à 3 typhons successifs dont "Polly" fut le plus violent. De nombreux sites historiques ont également subi des destructions et d'importants dommages. Cette zone est la plus touchée. On compte en effet plus de 3 388 maisons détruites/endommagées et les dégâts se chiffrent à environ 74,2 millions de dollars.

L'Institut de volcanologie et de séismiologie des Philippines a enregistré jusqu'à 709 secousses sismiques de basse fréquence et 45 de haute fréquence en l'espace de 24 heures. Les secousses de basse fréquence indiquent que le magma, ou la roche en fusion, se déplace vers la surface; celles de haute fréquence montrent que les formations rocheuses sous le volcan se fracturent à cause de la pression. *(Herald-Tribune).*

VIET NAM
Inondations

Déjà sérieusement touché durant la même période (septembre/octobre) en 1984 et 1985 par une série de typhons faisant au total plus de 1 200 morts et des milliers de sans abri, le Viet Nam doit à nouveau faire face à des inondations suite à des pluies torrentielles qui se sont abattues sur le centre du pays et qui comptent parmi les plus graves depuis 1950.

ZAIRE
Tremblement de terre

Un tremblement de terre, le plus violent jamais survenu dans cette région, d'une magnitude de 6,7 sur l'échelle de Richter, a ébranlé la province de Shaba à quelques 1 300 km à l'est de Kinshasa. 9 morts, 61 blessés, plus de 50 maisons détruites, tel est le bilan, somme toute léger de cette catastrophe.

Source : ***DAH-UNDRO Rapports de situation, Articles des journaux : Le Monde, The European Times, Herald Tribune, Journal de Genève et le Nouveau Quotidien.***

The Road to Suleimaniyah

by Gerhard Putman-Cramer
Chief, Special Unit for Iraq, DHA-UNDRO, Geneva

DHA-UNDRO/G. Putman-Cramer

There are roads in our minds and memories that have a special meaning, that recall a slice of history, that symbolize a particular struggle. There is the road to Mandalay, the road to Amman, to name but two. In this context there is also, already in the minds of many, the road to Suleimaniyah, in Northern Iraq. It is a road on which people fled when Halabja, Said Sadiq and many other towns and villages were destroyed, not so many years ago. It is a road on which people fled in the aftermath of the Gulf War, and the ensuing civil strife, in the early months of 1991. It is also the road many of these people took to return to their homes.

I travelled on this road last year in the autumn, and up from that road into the northern part of the Suleimaniyah Governorate. The temperatures were then already cold, the weather damp and some muddy stretches definitely requiring the four-wheel drive cars we were in. The low over-hanging mist gave the already eerie ruins, all stone walls demolished, a surrealistic aspect. But one was certainly not on a film set. Harsh realities made sure one remained reminded thereof. The Halabja "dispensary" for example, with a long line of blanket-covered patients - most of them obviously suffering from chest infections - waiting for the care of the one over-worked local doctor, with limited quantities of badly needed medical supplies. The children were playing in the rubble, noses running.

That winter, temperatures fell to -25 centigrade. Were it not for what is recognized to have been a most successful "winterization programme", implemented by UNHCR and associated NGOs, in the overall framework of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme, the period between December '91 and March '92 could have been catastrophic. The weather conditions alone would have killed many among those without shelter. Close to two thousand heavily-laden trucks were then travelling down from south-east Turkey with building materials. Past the border, the Habur bridge, the Zakho plain, the steep inclines and hills near Dohuk, the Government checkpoints around Mosul, and then the winding slippery road to Arbil

beyond which starts the stretch to Suleimaniyah and the mountainous eastern-most regions.

At that time the main roads were used, UN Guards totalled 400 in the north and escorted the convoys from the border, past the many army and "peshmerga" check-points, until final destinations. Food was brought in also, as were medical supplies and equipment. There were hundreds of international staff - with a variety of skills but with identical dedication - deployed throughout the countryside, providing both essential items and services for the population to stand a good chance to survive what proved to be the harshest winter in at least 25 years. That was then, last winter. In fact, it ended only a few months ago. And we now prepare for the next winter.

In the last few months, so much has changed however, also on the road to Suleimaniyah. The media have faithfully reported the changes in question, duly highlighting the details of a further deterioration of the situation (to audiences increasingly accustomed to worsening disasters). A handful of staff is left in the north. Serious security incidents over the last few months have rightfully caused many to leave (staff have had hand grenades thrown at their houses and under their cars). The region has always been violent, it would seem, the nightly silence regularly shattered by gun-fire. But increasingly so now, UN and NGO staff have found themselves to be targets. Several UN Guards have had to be evacuated with gun-shot and grenade wounds. One UN Guard was killed a few months ago.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the UN and the Government of Iraq expired on 30 June 1992. The extension thereof is still being discussed*. I accompanied Under-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson to Baghdad in August for a long week of negotiations which ended in an agreement to disagree. In the meantime, UN and NGO staff have found it increasingly difficult to stay and to work. Visas and travel permits are practically no longer issued and crossing Government checkpoints is therefore no longer possible. Staff in Baghdad are bound to remain there, frustrated by their inability to perform the tasks for which they were sent out and currently subjectd to harassment and humiliation, in incidents which the Government authorities attribute to "spontaneous actions from individuals who resent the UN's role in the country" and which they are seemingly unable to do anything about.

Tent camps in Said Sadiq in ruins

DHA-UNDRO/G. Putman-Cramer

Meanwhile the road to Suleimaniyah is practically empty. Government checkpoints bordering the northern Governorates prevent vital supplies from coming in. There is increased scarcity of food supplies and, for that matter, of everything else. What is perhaps missing most, as the winter approaches, is fuel - both for cooking and heating. Fuel will thus have to be brought in (also to prevent the cutting down of entire wooded hills as a fuel substitute). Over 40 million litres will be required, as a bare minimum, for the winter months. These will have to be purchased, transported by trucks, stored and distributed before the first snow-falls, which shut off the "back roads" and can also paralyse the main traffic arterias. The closest source and cheapest fuel is just down the road from Suleimaniyah, in Iraq itself, beyond the Government forces' checkpoints ... but will one be able to purchase fuel there, and truck it into the northern Governorates, in view of the current "supply restrictions"? If one does purchase the fuel elsewhere (outside of the country), making use of the "main" roads, will the Government checkpoints allow the trucks to pass? These are indeed sizeable questions still unresolved but a few weeks before the onset of winter!

The road to Suleimaniyah - and on from there - must see many trucks in these same weeks or there is a genuine risk that the road will be used, again, by hundreds of thousands of desperate people fleeing the homes in which they could not be fed or heated. The road to Suleimaniyah, like another road, is paved with good intentions. Intentions, even good ones, have however never replaced either kerosene or beans or antibiotics ... A "Winter Plan for Northern Iraq" has been elaborated by the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Programme staff in Iraq, together with the staff of the Special Unit for Iraq, DHA-UNDRO, Geneva. This is an attempt to assist the population in question - which is particularly vulnerable at this time - to survive the imminent winter, in spite of there being (still) no agreement regarding the continuation of the humanitarian programme as a whole. Discussions are continuing nevertheless, last week in New York - as the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs was attending the annual General Assembly meeting - and next week, again, in Baghdad.

For the Winter Plan to be successful, for the activities encompassed therein to be implemented in time, for the necessary funding to be available, for the additional UN and NGO staff to be recruited and deployed, with visas and travel permits, for the supplies to be purchased and transported, for pre-positioning and distribution to take place, for all related logistics problems to be resolved, for the security situation to allow all concerned to proceed, for the snow not to fall early this year, for all this, if it happens, we should be truly grateful. After this winter, let us hope the road to Suleimaniyah is remembered for the right reasons.

Road on the way out from Halabja

DHA-UNDRO/G. Putman Cramer

*Editor's note:

This article was written in early October 1992. On October 22 the Memorandum of Understanding between Iraq and the United Nations was finally signed. ■

DHA-UNDRO at Work
16 August - 15 October 1992

Relief: Mobilization and Co-ordination

■ **Afghanistan:** Flash floods in the Afghan Hindukush mountains north of Kabul in early September, affected 30,000 people in an area where many displaced persons and returnees had sought refuge. DHA-UNDRO and UNDP provided emergency grants totalling US $80,000. An additional US $100,000 was contributed by the United Kingdom through DHA-UNDRO to provide assistance to the affected population. Relief was distributed through the UN office in Mazar-i-Sharif and co-ordinated by the DHA-UNDRO/UNDP Resident Representative for Afghanistan.

■ **Bahamas - Hurricane:** The passage of hurricane Andrew across north-western Bahamas on 24 August caused wides-pread damage to housing and infrastructure, severely affecting the agricultural and fishing industries. Before devastating south-east Florida and Louisiana on the United States mainland, the hurricane, estimated to be the most damaging one in the region this century, left 4 persons dead and 1,700 homeless in the Bahamas. Three DHA-UNDRO Information Reports were issued.

■ **Colombia: Earthquake/Volcanic activity** - On 17 and 18 October, northern Colombia was struck by two severe earthquakes with a magnitude of 6.6 and 7.2 on the Richter scale, followed by aftershocks. As a direct consequence of this seismic activity in the region, a mud volcano exploded in northwestern Colombia on 18 October, burying houses under mud and stones. At least 6 people were killed, 60 were injured and thousands were left homeless. The United Nations Radio Readiness Group in New York transmitted to DHA-UNDRO information on the events, received from radio amateurs in the affected area. DHA-UNDRO Geneva maintained continuous contact with the UN Co-ordinator in Bogota and the Government of Colombia, which had previously received United Nations disaster mitigation assistance. On 22 October, Government authorities considered that, should no furher developments occur, there was no need for international emergency aid but hoped for international support for reconstruction once needs were identified. Five Information Reports were issued.

■ **Egypt - Earthquake:** On 12 October an earthquake measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale shook Cairo and the vicinity, resulting in 552 deaths and 9.929 injuries. DHA-UNDRO immediately dispatched delegates responsible for operational co-ordination and search and rescue to assist national authorities and United Nations Resident Representative. On 15 October an international appeal for assistance was issued. A DHA-UNDRO emergency cash grant of US $50,000 was allocated for local purchase of relief supplies. Three emergency relief airlifts from the Pisa warehouse were organized in co-ordination with the Italian Government. Based on the reports from the DHA-UNDRO delegates on site and, following a request from the Egyptian Government DHA-UNDRO organized a mission of experts to assess structural damages to bridges. Eight Situation Reports were issued as of 23 October.

■ **India - Floods:** Torrential rains caused by southwest monsoon fell on Kerala State in the south of India between 8-10 October. Rains resulted in the overflow of rivers and of water reservoirs and triggered landslides. According to preliminary information, at least 51 persons were killed. The Government of India, with the help of the State Administrative Services, provided relief to the affected population and distributed assistance in cash and in kind. DHA-UNDRO issued an Information Report on this disaster. No request for international assistance was made.

■ **Indonesia - Landslides:** Continuous heavy rain caused landslides in central/western Java. DHA-UNDRO issued an Information Report on 13 October.

■ **Moldova:** A DHA-UNDRO Relief Officer took part in a UN Fact-Finding mission to Moldova from 24 to 28 August. The mission which was led by a UN Director of Political Affairs and included an officer from the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), aimed

at helping supervise the implementation of the agreement on the principle for a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in the Dniester region of Moldova *(see article page 28).*

■ **Nicaragua - Tsunami:** On 1 September, a major earthquake occurred off the coast of Nicaragua, generating a tsunami which swept over about 200 kms of the Nicaraguan Pacific coastline. 116 people were reported dead, 63 missing, 489 injured. The tsunami affected about 14,000 people and total losses were estimated at US $25 million. DHA-UNDRO launched an appeal for international assistance on 2 September.

■ **Pakistan - Floods:** Following the monsoon season in August, torrential rains fell on the provinces of Arad Kashmir, North Western Frontier and Punjab in September. The death toll was over 2,000 people and several flood control systems had to be demolished in order to prevent cities (including the historic city of Multan) from being flooded. The damage caused by floods will seriously affect Pakistan's economic development plans. Crop damage was estimated at over US $80 million, and the total economic loss amounted to over US $1 billion. The UN General Assembly appealed for assistance to Pakistan, and by early October the international community had donated or pledged over US $10 million in emergency relief contributions. DHA-UNDRO started the assistance programme with an emergency relief grant of US $50,000 and dispatched a delegate to assist the Resident Co-ordinator (who chairs the UN Disaster Management Team) in co-ordinating relief activities and assistance.

The Government approached the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank and Saudi Arabia to assess the economic impact of the disaster and to assist in rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes.

■ **Philippines - Volcanic Eruption:** Mount Pinatubo, which first erupted in June 1991, after having been dormant for 600 years, continues to be active. The most recent eruptions, along with three successive typhoons, spawned lava flows and flash floods causing widespread destruction in Central Luzon. As of 9 September 1992, 36 persons were reported dead, 15 missing and over 939,000 were affected. More than 6,350 homes were destroyed or damaged. Following a request from the Government, DHA-UNDRO launched an appeal for international assistance. By 15 October, contributions in cash and in kind worth US $6.8 million from the international community had been reported to DHA-UNDRO. Seven Situation Reports were issued.

■ **Somalia:** Following a joint mission with DHA-UNDRO in September, the Swiss Disaster Relief Unit (SDR), seconded two telecommunications specialists and one logistics expert to the office of the Co-ordinator for Humanitarian Programmes in Somalia. DHA-UNDRO provided 300 kg of HF, VHF and satellite communications equipment in order to facilitate co-ordination among all partners involved in the operations and to contribute to an increase of security and safety for all staff in Somalia.

■ **Viet Nam - Floods:** Torrential rains poured down on the central provinces of Viet Nam for five days during the first week of October. Preliminary reports indicated 22 persons killed, 6 missing, 68,000 houses flooded and 24,000 ha of crops damaged. DHA-UNDRO informed the international community, and is monitoring the situation through it representative in Hanoi.

■ **Pisa Warehouse:** The implementation of the computer system for warehouse management in Pisa started in September, and all data relating to each type of material (description, weight, quantity, etc.) has been loaded.

■ Since the beginning of October, two relief operations for Egypt (Cairo earthquake) have been carried out from the Pisa warehouse. The first operation with two G-222 aircraft of the Italian Air Force; the second with a B-707 aircraft chartered by DHA-UNDRO in co-operation with the Italian Government. The relief goods that were shipped included tents, blankets, generators and kitchen sets.

■ The United States Government recently donated, through the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), 200 cases of ready-to eat meals for on-site operational co-ordination missions carried out by DHA-UNDRO.

Disaster Mitigation

■ **Argentina:** A Disaster Mitigation Branch (DMB) delegate carried out a mission to the country from 1 to 4 October to assist the National Civil Defence and the Ministry of Economy in the preparation and reformulation of two Disaster Mitigation Project Proposals. The delegate attended the Regional Conference for the Americas of the Federation of the World Volunteer Firefighter Associations.

■ **Chile:** A DMB delegate undertook a mission to Chile on 5 and 6 October to discuss, with the Minister of the Interior and the UNDP/Santiago Office, the im-

plementation of the "National Civil Protection System Support Project".

■ **Colombia:** From 7 to 10 October a review of the DHA-UNDRO ongoing Disaster Mitigation Project was carried out by a DMB delegate with the National Disaster Management Office and UNDP/Bogota.

The Chief of the DMB undertook a mission to Colombia from 7 to 10 October. The objectives of the mission were: to assist the Swiss Disaster Unit in assessing their recently-completed project for seismic network establishment and risk assessment; to give guidance on the use of this new information as input to prevention and preparedness measures, especially in the city of Cali; to review progress with the tsunami mitigation programme for Tumaco; to visit and assess progress with the multi-hazard studies in Manizales; to examine with the new Director-General of the National Disaster Office the priorities among scenarios for inclusion in the future work programme.

This mission illustrates the promotion of close co-operation between technical and municipal authorities, thereby ensuring the formulation and practical application of mitigation measures.

■ **Cuba:** A DMB delegate participated in the Third International Congress on Disasters which took place in Cuba from 12 to 15 October. He also assisted the National Disaster Management Office in the preparation of the "Flood Preparedness Project".

■ **Egypt:** DHA-UNDRO received an official request from the Government of Egypt to dispatch a team of civil engineers to check on possible structural damage to bridges in Cairo as the result of the earthquake of 13 October. The Office sent two consultants to carry out the mission from 20 to 26 October.

■ **Nepal:** Three officials of the Nepali Government are currently attending a disaster management training course at AIT/ADPC, Bangkok, scheduled from 12 October to 20 November, cost of which is covered by the DHA-UNDRO Fellowship Programme. Two Under-Secretaries from the Ministry of Home are participating in the course within the framework of the DHA-UNDRO Nepal Project NEP/85/002, "Institutional Support to the Disaster Preparedness and Relief Plan", and an official of the Prime Minister's Office was awarded a fellowship from the DHA-UNDRO Fellowship Programme to attend the course.

■ **Turkey - Protection of Cultural Heritage:** In early October, a DMB delegate took part in a seminar in Turkey on the protection of cultural heritage from disasters, with the purpose of illustrating some of the lessons recently learnt and of the protective measures applied in Yemen.

■ **Viet Nam:** The Government of Viet Nam has requested technical assistance in disaster mitigation, particularly through improving dyke design and maintenance. DHA-UNDRO has now raised US $100,000 for the project thanks to contributions from the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom. The DM Branch undertook a preliminary study, organized a training seminar and drafted a strategy document. This document is expected to serve as a basis for a round table discussion between the Government and interested donors, scheduled for November-December this year.

■ **DHA-UNDRO/PAHO Technical Collaboration in Disaster Mitigation:** In early October, representatives from DHA-UNDRO discussed with the Chief of PAHO's Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief Co-ordination Programme, PAHO's proposal for a closer technical collaboration in disaster mitigation in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was felt that both organizations would benefit from joint activities, with the prime objective of addressing the whole spectrum of disaster management. In practical terms, DHA staff would be operating from PAHO's well-established regional offices in conjunction with PAHO's experts in public health preparedness. The DHA/PAHO team approach would include technical co-operation as well as disaster mitigation promotion and awareness-raising activities. Both organizations are currently studying the modalities and implications of this proposal.

Information, Communications, Exchange of Views and Contacts

■ **Iraq:** A Memorandum of Understanding for humanitarian assistance to Iraq was signed at UN Headquarters on 22 October by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Jan Eliasson, on behalf of the UN, and by the Iraqi Ambassador Mr. Nizar Hamdoun.

■ **Somalia:** As part of an overall effort to determine ways to accelerate relief assistance for Somalia, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Jan Eliasson, led an Inter-Agency Mission to Somalia from 10 to 12 September. *(see article on 100-Day Action Programme for Somalia page 7).*

■ **Co-ordination of Procurement of Relief Supplies/Stockpiles:** In line with General Assembly Resolution 46/182, inter-agency co-operation was enhanced in Geneva on 29-30 September when representatives from several United Nations agencies met to pool the experience of the UN system and other humanitarian aid organizations in the provision of goods and services for emergency relief. The purpose of this first meeting of a specially convened working group, hosted by DHA-UNDRO, was to prepare a catalogue for use in the field to facilitate prompt response to cases of emergency by providing the rapid delivery of goods and services in all types of natural or man-made disasters or other emergency situations. The meeting was attended by representatives from UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, WHO and DHA-UNDRO, and was chaired by the Director of IAPSO (Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office). At the meeting, DHA-UNDRO presented its project for the development of a register of stockpiles of disaster relief items available for international assistance, aiming at expediting international response to disasters/ emergencies. The project was positively received by all participants.

■ **JICA/DHA-UNDRO/ADPC Training Course on Disaster Prevention and Mitigation:** The Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA), DHA-UNDRO and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center-AIT agreed, on 5 October, to organize a new training course on disaster prevention and mitigation for technical personnel associated with disaster prevention and mitigation policy in Asian-Pacific countries. The purpose of this course is to provide participants with an opportunity to upgrade relevant techniques and knowledge in the field of disaster prevention and mitigation. The course will cover the broad principles of disaster management, the relationship between disaster and development as well as the techniques of hazard and vulnerability analysis. The course also aims at strengthening an Asian-Pacific network for the practice of disaster prevention and mitigation. The first course will be held from 31 January to 21 February 1993 at the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre-AIT, in Bangkok.

■ **Video Conference:** On 4 September, a DMB delegate represented the United Nations on the Geneva panel of a video conference between Geneva and Washington entitled, "Space and Disaster Management". The conference was a session of the "World Space Congress", which took place in Washington as one of the activities of the "International Space Year" (1992).

■

UNIENET Corner

In May this year we conducted **two surveys:** One was for network users, and the other was for organizations providing disaster management information on the network.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed towards the surveys. Their comments and suggestions are very valuable and will help us to upgrade services and plan new developments.

Forty percent of UNIENET users have responded. Seventy percent of them access UNIENET on a daily or weekly basis, mainly for e-mail services and Bulletin Boards. The databases are accessed less frequently. The gateway to other United Nations networks is widely used especially by UNIENET, UNDP, PAHO and DHA users.

A significant percentage of users feel that UNIENET is too costly to access. Access charges are of approximately US$ 40-60 per month (except for those who are subsidized). These charges correspond e.g. to a half hour access per week for a user located outside the USA (local telecommunications charges depending on the country are not included).

UNIENET should offer a more user friendly service, more training, documentation and an improved information update capability.

Nearly half of the user community would like to access other networks like Internet and Bitnet through UNIENET. Fidonet, APCnet and OMnet connections are also requested.

Users would also like to see databases on UNIENET covering the following topics: Disaster history, Relief Needs and Pledges, Search and Rescue teams, Refugees, Early Warning, Stockpiles, Nutrition, NGOs, Hazardous chemicals, Training, etc.

Most of the participant organizations would be in a position to offer more information on UNIENET (projects, appeals, pledges, locust and other migratory pest ,...) and several institutions among the network community would promote the use of UNIENET.

Several institutions among the network community have offered to promote the use of UNIENET.

We welcome the following new users:
International Computing Center-Geneva-Switzerland (UNX195), **Defenciv Co. France** (UNX196), **National Education and Technical Alliance-Pensylvania-USA** (UNX197), **PAHO Ecuador** (UNX170) and **Costa Rica** (UNX172), **IDNDR Ecuador** (UNX171), **Centre for Public Service Telecommunications-USA** (UNX199).

Should you need more information on UNIENET, please do not hesitate to contact the Network System Manager, Rosa M. Delgado at DHA-UNDRO.

SASAKAWA/DHA-UNDRO Disaster Prevention Award

Ecuadorian Geophysical Institute receives 1992 Prize

On 6 and 7 May this year, a five-member international jury representing Africa, Australia, Europe, Latin America and Oceania met in Geneva. The jury had come together to choose, from a list of 18 candidates, the winner of the 1992 Sasakawa/ DHA-UNDRO Disaster Prevention Award.

The purpose of the annual Award, created in 1986 through the initiative of Mr.Ryoichi Sasakawa, Chairman of the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, is to promote humanitarian efforts to assist those affected by natural disasters as well as to protect those living in high-risk zones and struggling for survival against natural adversities.

After due deliberation, the international jury were unanimous in their choice: the winner of the 1992 prize was the Geophysical Institute of the Escuela Politécnica Nacional (ESPONA) from Quito, Ecuador for outstanding achievements in the field of volcanic and seismic disaster mitigation.

Candidates (whether individual or collective) for the Award must have distinguished themselves in outstanding and internationally-recognized action, going beyond the scope of their normal functions, through, *inter alia*, instigating scientific or social activities which contribute to the consolidation of disaster prevention and preparedness and/or strengthening people's awareness of natural disasters. In these various fields, the Geophysical Institute, under its Technical Director, Dr. Minard Hall has achieved distinction.

It has successfully assisted in the formulation and implementation of various innovative disaster mitigation projects and managment of volcano crises in Ecuador and has been actively involved in similar activities in neighbouring Latin American

From left to right: Mr. T. Ito. Minister, Japanese Mission, Geneva; Dr. M. Hall ,Technical Director, Geophysical Institute, ESPONA; Mr. C. LaMunière, Director DHA-UNDRO; Mrs. Hall and Mr. J. Tomblin, Chief, Disaster Mitigation Branch.

Extract from the DHA-UNDRO presentation speech

The Sasakawa International Jury Committee was impressed not only by the Geophysical Institute's involvement in promoting scientific studies for disaster mitigiation in many countries of Latin America (i.e. well beyond its routine obligations to serve the needs of Ecuador), but also by the way in which, apart from its normal scientific obligations in earthquake and volcano monitoring and risk assessment, it has made considerable efforts to work with the public safety and emergency planning authorities to explain these risks and the appropriate prevention and preparedness measures to local officials and residents in the most threatened communities. This readiness to help build bridges between the collection of scientific knowledge and its application to meet local public safety needs is an example of the type of co-operation which is very essential for successful disaster mitigation, and corresponds precisely to one of the primary goals of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

countries, particularly in times of emergencies. For example, during the build-up to the catastrophic eruption of Ruiz Volcano in Colombia during 1985, and at the more recent eruptions of Sabancaya in Peru and Galeras in Colombia, Dr. Hall and his team took a leading part in the international technical assistance co-ordinated by DHA-UNDRO.

The Institute has also prepared and published a series of volcanic hazard and risk maps, identified and mapped the major active fault zones, installed and operated the national seismograph and accelerograph network, and acted as an advisor to Civil Defence.

It has also helped to organize international seminars and training workshops in volcanology and seismology, public awareness talks, newspaper articles, radio and television programmes. An illustration of such achievements is the series of workshops dealing with volcanic and seismic hazard evaluation, organized by the Institute under DHA-UNDRO auspices. The workshops greatly improved communication and mutual assistance between groups previously working independently in other Latin American countries. In neighbouring Colombia and Peru, the Institute has helped to instruct technical personnel and civil defence officials in the hazard evaluation techniques developed in Ecuador. This collaboration has been so successful that the Governments of Colombia and Ecuador have recently signed a five-year agreement to assist one another in times of volcanic and seismic crisis (allowing for the exchange of personnel and essential equipment). Its success has prompted an initiative by the Peruvian Government to reach a similar agreement with Ecuador.

The work and influence of the Institute is all the more impressive when one considers not only its relatively recent (1983) creation, but also the fact that it functions with a total of only 15 staff members, including student volunteeers and office personnel.

At a ceremony which took place in the Palais des Nations, in Geneva, on 17 September 1992, a cheque for US $45,000 and a crystal trophy were presented by Mr. Charles H. LaMunière, Director of DHA-UNDRO, to the Technical Director of the Institute, who accepted them on behalf of ESPONA. ■

Excerpts from the speech of Dr. Minard Hall, Technical Director of the Geophysical Institute, ESPONA

The Institute has been actively studying volcanic and seismic hazards, and communicating the results to the National Civil Defence office of Ecuador in order to improve civil defence awareness of natural disasters and the tectonic environment in which we live... (The Institute's) principal duties include the monitoring of 9 volcanoes that threaten a population of 3 million living within the Interandean Valley... major engineering projects, including hydro-electric plants, are located in the valley and are threatened by volcanic eruptions and earthquakes ... . The evaluation of volcanic hazards in Ecuador has been a (further) major duty. The resulting maps have stimulated Civil Defence into preparing contingency plans, practicing eruption scenarios, and even carrying out real evacuations of up to 5,000 people in high-risk areas... these activities have had the positive result of making the general population more aware and interested in natural disasters and how best to prepare for them..

...The Institute has recently completed ground acceleration maps for the country, which will greatly improve Ecuador's building code and consequently diminish the effects of future earthquakes in urban areas.

...The future goals of the Institute are to improve what we are doing, make our facilities and experiences open to other Latin American countries by interchange of personnel, and at the same time make Civil Defence, both in Ecuador as well as in other countries, more aware of recent scientific progress, and of the possibility of successful mitigation of the effects of volcanic and seismic disasters, as well as to strengthen their programmes of public education. On behalf of my colleagues at the ESPONA, I thank you for the honour and distinction that you have bestowed upon us.

Extract from the speech of Mr.Tetsuo Ito, Minister in the Japanese Embassy, Geneva, representing the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation

Since its creation the Geophysical Institute of ESPONA has been actively involved in various disaster prevention activities... (which have) con-tributed greatly to the enhance-ment of the capacity to respond efficiently to natural disaster reduction not only in Ecuador itself, but also in neighbouring countries in Latin America I am sure that, having been appreciated by the international jury... (the) efforts made by the Institute deserved this year's Award. I would like to express my sincere congratulations to the Institute, represented here today by Mr. Hall, in the hope of the further development and outstanding activities of the Institute.

UNDP/DHA-UNDRO Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP)

Disaster Management Inter-Country Workshop for Southern Africa Harare, Zimbabwe, 14-18 September 1992

This regional workshop was held in Harare to boost the disaster management capability of six of the countries currently affected by prolonged drought, and quite possibly prone to other disasters in the future. The workshop was unique for several reasons:

- it was the first DMTP workshop at the country level in Africa;
- it was the first DMTP workshop to partly respond to a current, ongoing emergency while also focusing on preparations for impending or likely events;
- it was DMTP's first attempt at such a large, multi-country workshop;
- the workshop was organized and run by a closely-knit UN team consisting of five UN agencies (DHA-UNDRO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR and WHO) with strong additional inputs from two others, FAO and WFP;
- the workshop was visited and addressed on its last day by two senior UN officials: Mr. Jan Eliasson, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Mrs. Catherine Bertini, Executive Director of the World Food Programme. The Resident Co-ordinators of Southern Africa were also all present on the last day.

The countries invited to send participants (referred to as teams in the workshop) were Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The teams were chosen by the UN Resident Co-ordinators in consultation with the Governments and included Government officials, most of whom were key disaster players; NGO officials; members of the UN Disaster Management Team; bilateral donors (in certain instances). There were also some 20 participants from within and outside the region who were not part of the country teams.

The workshop took a deliberately broad view of disaster management, with a view to building the foundations for long-term protection from future, unforeseeable disasters while also addressing the issues connected with the current drought.

Objectives

The goals of the workshop were:

- to help country teams develop disaster management strategic plans and the necessary commitment to implement them;
- to identify regional disaster management issues;
- to develop strong, intersectoral teams.

Each team modified these objectives to tailor them to their own specific circumstances.

Methodology

As with all other DMTP events, this workshop sought to empower participants to control major components of their learning as well as to jointly build positions and take decisions they could apply immediately upon their return.

The participants spent some 60 per cent of the workshop as country teams, under the guidance of one of the trained UN facilitators. A seventh group, consisting of regional and international experts, worked concurrently with the country teams. Teams were also frequently paired up so that countries could exchange and compare experience and ideas. Plenary sessions were also organized so that all participants could be exposed to new information and regional issues affecting everyone.

Thus participants were able to learn and collaborate in several different groups. A certain amount of good-natured competition between country teams was encouraged. Throughout the workshop, all participants were provided with comprehensive written training material on disaster management issues.

The UN facilitators were all experienced middle to senior disaster managers who have been trained as trainers within the DMTP.

Programme

The programme was structured as a building process that progressively allowed participants to be exposed to levels of new information and awareness leading to their defining, as teams, national strategic plans and action. Thus the sequence of the workshop, in the different groups described above, took the participants through the following steps:

Agreement of team objectives; definition of roles and responsibilities for disasters; presentation and analysis of their country's current disaster management situation; mitigation concepts and opportunities; determination of the country's current response capacity; formulation of the country's future disaster-management strategic plan and examination of its implementation; comparison and agreement of the six country plans.

The programme of the seventh group focused on a series of regional issues.

Workshop results

All of the primary goals of the workshop were met, namely:

- first-class strategic plans for disaster management by country and excellent commitment to follow up;
- identification of regional issues;
- strengthening of inter-sectoral teams.

Additional bonuses included:

- the emergency of an inter-country network of disaster managers in the Southern Africa region;
- a strong image of UN leadership and inter-agency co-operation.

The results of group 7, however, ended on a marginally less fruitful note. While accepting the overall validity of the "regional considerations" drawn up by this group the six country teams preferred to refrain from endorsing them since they had not had sufficient time to work closely with the seventh group. The SADCC members of the workshop announced their intention to breathe life into the "considerations" through their own channels. In any event, it was correctly noted that the workshop was not intended as a forum in which to take formal decisions.

In large measure, these particularly rich results are to be ascribed to the hard work of the participants.

Follow up

Various actions are called for:

- The strategic plans now need considerable detailed work, including data and analysis.

- Although undoubtedly enthusiastic and committed, country teams will benefit from the active interest of local offices and from the Resident Co-ordinator, and the UNDP National officer in particular.
- The UN-DMT could profitably be convened in each country and briefed on the workshop results, as well as on its own role and functioning.
- The designing of mitigation projects should be encouraged. Countries may need guidance in how to fund these, be it through IPF, SPR or bilateral sources.
- The workshop has provided a springboard from which to launch various complementary activities which the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa may now wish to explore. ■

DMTP Iran Country Workshop Teheran, 17-24 September 1992

This workshop is the second country workshop held in the Middle East region, following Turkey in June 1992. It consisted of a one-day session of the UN DMT (17 September) and a six-day workshop (19-24 September) with 57 participants throughout the workshop, including senior government managers from the Ministries of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Power, Health, Housing, Education, Planning and Budget, Public Works and Transportation, as well as scientists, researchers, academics and representatives of the national society of the Red Crescent and Civil Defence.

The workshop evolved around two types of natural hazards, earthquakes and floods, by means of plenary discussions and group exercises around two case studies - one on the Gilan Earthquake and the other on the Sistan Floods. A third scenario discussed industrial hazards and their impact on environmental degradation, using the expertise of Mr. Thwaites from the UNEP/APELL programme. The group exercises on this topic led to the identification of priority measures to be taken in terms of prevention and preparedness.

The fourth major type of emergency of concern to Iran, as identified during the planning process for the workshop, is the issue of massive displacement of population as a result of conflicts: internal displacement due to the Iraq-Iran war and external displacement of population from neighbouring countries which led, at one point, to 4.2 million refugees (3 million from Afghanistan, 1.2 million from northern Iraq) on the Iranian territory.

The special contribution of UNHCR who facilitated the discussion enabled the group exercises to provide a number of concrete suggestions for mitigating the impact of such mass flows - e.g. establishment of an information system to provide early warning on

potential crises, increased co-operation with international organizations, especially the UN system, and a better understanding of the capacity and role of NGOs, etc.

Participants expressed special appreciation for the fact that this workshop gave them a unique opportunity to meet together in a multi-disciplinary forum as representatives of various ministries, institutions and organizations who benefited from the inter-action of the group and reached a better common understanding of the issues at stake, correcting their professional bias and helping them in reaching a consensus on the most strategic issues. ■

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Disaster management workshop ended, projects proposed

TEHRAN (United Nations Information Center) -- For the first time in Iran, 74 senior Iranian managers from the ministries, governmental and non-governmental organizations completed a six-day workshop, conducted by three United Nations instructors, here on Thursday.

At the end of the workshop, the participants proposed a number of projects for disaster mitigation and preparedness. The subjects of these projects are on establishment of a national disaster research and training institute, mitigation of temblor effects, forecast of floods, construction of houses resistible to earthquakes and some other themes. The projects will be jointly studied and finalized by the Islamic Republic government and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

So far there have been 10 disaster management workshops held throughout the world. After Turkey, Iran is the second country in the Middle East region which hosted the workshop.

Ms. Nahla Abdallah Haidar, the training manager of the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO) and the workshop's instructor said that the objective of the workshop was to bolster awareness of the disaster managers in Iran with respect to disaster management and to link issues related to disaster with those of the development.

Bijan Daftari, deputy director of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, while welcoming the holding of the workshop said that in spite of having heavy workload at his office, participating in the workshop was an utmost priority to him. "It was a good opportunity for me to use the international experiences of the United Nations' instructors," he said.

Dr. Stephen Webster, another instructor of the workshop, from the University of Wisconsin, while praising the high level of competence and expertise of the Iranian disaster managers said, "Iran can be a model in terms of disaster response capacity for the developing countries."

DMTP NEWS

DMTP NEWS (Published bi-annually). As announced in the previous issue of DHA-UNDRO News, the first edition of the Disaster Management Training Programme Newsletter appeared in August. We await your reactions to it and are looking forward to receiving your suggestions for items for possible inclusion in the next issue which will be published in February 1993.

Statement by the Secretary-General on the occasion of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction 14 October 1992

Recent events have shown that sustainable development is a priority issue for the community of nations. For the United Nations, whose Charter assigns to it the major responsibility of promoting social and economic development, a key challenge today is the need for an integrated approach. This involves bringing together the requirements of development and the objectives of peace, democracy and human rights; and it involves integrated development policies with policies to protect the environment.

It is therefore highly appropriate that the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction should be observed this year under the theme "Natural Disaster Reduction for Sustainable Development".

Since the goal of the IDNDR is "the reduction of loss of life, property damage and social and economic disruption caused by natural disasters", the linkage between natural disaster reduction and sustainable development, underscored by the theme, is of special significance to all Decade partners.

Natural disasters have and continue to pose serious threats to sustainable development. Precious development resources are lost when a disaster wipes out the products of investment. There is a further loss of development resources from the reduction in the production of goods and services.

Development activity is also negatively affected by disasters when ongoing programmes have to be interrupted to allow a shift in resources from long-term programmes to short-term recovery and emergency response programme. Secondary effects include inflation, balance of payments problems, increases in fiscal expenditure and decreases in monetary revenues resulting in serious setbacks to economic growth in general, delays and cancellation of development programmes and the creation of a climate which discourages new investment.

This is particularly painful for poor countries that have not yet achieved levels of economic development which can be termed sustainable. The diversion of resources into emergency relief efforts hampers progress towards sustainable development. When inappropriate development policies are pursued, one result is often damage to the environment, which can in turn cause or hasten natural disasters.

A comparison of past and recent records on the impact of natural hazards of similar intensities on communities of varying levels of economic development brings out the significant role which poverty-induced vulnerability plays in losses incurred by natural disasters.

The driving force of the IDNDR is a shared commitment by all its partners to the reduction of losses from natural disasters, losses which cannot be justified in light of existing scientific knowledge and expertise in disaster management. IDNDR thus represents a welcome and timely shift in emphasis from post-disaster relief assistance to a more pro-active role in pre-disaster planning and prevention programmes. It also represents a growing world-wide consensus that the most effective way of reducing losses from natural disasters is through a reduction in the vulnerability of disaster-prone countries and communities by strengthening their own preparedness capacities and facilitating their access to new technology in the fields of early warning and other related sectors.

A strengthened co-ordination of efforts and strategies between all actors involved in development and relief work is essential to achieve the desired reduction in loss of life, property damage and social and economic disruption caused by natural disasters.

I wish to express my deepest appreciation of the exemplary collaboration of efforts which the IDNDR has initiated between people and Governments in developing and developed countries, the scientific community, financial institutions and industrial enterprises, among others. I wish all Decade partners every success in their noble cause. ■

Second United Nations Fact-Finding Mission to Moldova

DHA-UNDRO has been requested to participate in a mission aimed at facilitating the peace process in the Republic of Moldova where over 600 people have died and 1,200 have been injured since December 1991 following ethnic clashes in the region.

Moldova, a former Soviet Republic, became an independent State on 27 August 1991. Soon after the Trans-Dniester region voted for its independence from Moldova, through a Referendum in December 1991 which was not recognized by the Moldovan Government. Growing tensions culminated into a situation of internal crisis. Preoccupied by this escalation of violence in a part of the region still fragile in the wake of newly established independent republics, the Secretaty-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Ghali, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, called upon all parties concerned, on 22 June 1992, to "end the senseless fighting and to observe the utmost restraint" and under lined that all efforts should be made to strictly respect human rights and to protect minorities.

Between the end of June and the end of August, two UN Fact-Finding missions visited the area. The first one arrived in Kishinev, capital of Moldova, on 26 June and stayed until 4 July. Two days after its departure, the parties to the Moldovan conflict agreed to a cease-fire which, apart from a few incidents, has been holding. On 26 July, the President of Moldova, Mr. Mircea Snegur, and the President of Russia, Mr. Boris Yeltsine, signed an agreement on the principles for a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in the Dniester region of Moldova.

Ten days later, in a letter addressed to him by President Snegur, the Secretary-General was requested to consider "the possibility of sending to the Republic of Moldova a UN mission of observers to supervise the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement". Simultaneously, the Government of Russia conveyed to the Secretary-General its view that such a mission could "confirm the normalization of the situation in the conflict zone and - should it be necessary - contribute to its settlement."

The boundaries and names on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

The second Fact-Finding mission, joined by an Officer with Peace Keeping experience from the UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) and by an officer with expertise in Humanitarian Affairs from DHA-UNDRO, left on 24 August. Upon arrival in the capital of Chisinau, it was received by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Moldova for an overall review of the developments in the country since the first mission's visit, and met, later in the day, in the city of Bendery with members of the joint Military Command of the Peace Keeping Force.

During the following days the mission held extensive discussions with the Representatives of the Moldovan, Romanian, Russian and Ukrainian Joint Commission, which is responsible for *exercising control over the observance of the cease-fire agreement and the separation of parties implicated in the conflict.* A final exchange of views with the Minister of Foreign Affairs took place just before the mission returned to Geneva, where a report to the Secretary-General was finalized. ■

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